(c) whether the Prime Minister has conducted any enquiry;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) what steps are being taken to check the irregularities in this Council?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (e) S/Shri Abani Roy and Hari Shankar Mahale, Members of Parliament have written to Prime Minister pointing out certain alleged irregularities in the functioning of the Export Inspection Council of India (EIC). Examination of these alleged irregularities had been started. EIC is expected to follow the same degree of prudence and standard as is required for expenditure in the Government. The accounts of EIC are subject to statutory audit by the office of Comptroller & Auditor General of India and officers concerned are accountable for irregularity, it any, noticed therein.

Implementation of Agri-Export Zone Scheme

628. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether under the Exim Policy, 2001-02, 28 agri-export zones have so far been set up in 14 selected States;

(b) if so, what was the total multi-agency investment, so far;

(c) what is the investment by the private sector, Central Government agencies and also by the State Governments;

(d) whether the nodal agency for the programme, Agricultural and Processed Foods Export Development Authority has claimed that the total investment will result in an export earning of Rs. 3440.53 crore in the next five years; and

(e) if so, to what extent this plan has been fully implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) Government has approved setting up of 28 Agri-Export Zones (AEZs) in 14 different States;

(b) the likely total investment in these 28 AEZs is estimated to be Rs. 780.86 crores.

(c) the investments envisaged from various sectors in these 28 AEZs are approximately as follows:

Central Government and Central agencies	Rs. 261.54 crores
State Government and State agencies	Rs. 75. 12 crores
Private sector	Rs. 444.21 crores

(d) and (e) As per the proposals received from State Governments for setting up these 28 AEZs, the projected cumulative exports in next five years are around Rs. 4032 crores. The activities under these AEZs are at different stages. While in some AEZs, enhanced exports are envisaged in the next five years, in some exports have already started or are expected to commence by the end of this financial year.

Import of food products

629. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have allowed import of food products;

(b) whether Government have fixed GM certification norms for import of food products; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) to (c) Import restrictions are being removed since the early 1990's as part of economic liberalization programme of the Government and also in terms of our International obligations. At present, all the items on which import restrictions were maintained on account of balance of payment reasons are freely importable.

As per existing Rules for the Manufacture, Use, Import, Export and Storage of Hazardous Micro-organisms/Genetically Engineered Organisms or Cells 1989 notified under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, Rule 11 provides that food stuffs, ingredients in food stuffs and additives including processing aids containing or consisting of genetically